

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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MEMORANDUM

October 4, 2020

To: Members of the Subcommittee on Government Operations

Fr: Committee Staff

Re: Hearing on “The IRS in the Pandemic”

On **Wednesday, October 7, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.**, the Subcommittee on Government Operations will hold a hearing to examine the financial condition of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the role played by the IRS during the pandemic, and the state of the agency’s information technology (IT). The hearing will convene in person in 2154 Rayburn House Office Building and remotely using WebEx.

I. BACKGROUND

The coronavirus pandemic has strained the resource-depleted IRS and exposed vital shortcomings in the IRS’s technology that forced the shutdown of call centers and Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs). In March 2020, the IRS implemented major tax-related provisions as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and began to process more than 160 million Economic Income Payments (EIPs). As of late July, the IRS’s backlog of work includes about 9.2 million returns awaiting processing, and about 7.9 million pieces of unopened mail, including tax returns and check payments.¹ The challenges associated with addressing this significant backlog may also affect the IRS’s ability to appropriately prepare for the 2021 filing season.

II. WITNESSES

Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service

¹ Government Accountability Office, *COVID-19: Federal Efforts Could be Strengthened by Timely and Concerted Actions* (Sept. 2020) (GAO-20-701) (online at www.gao.gov/reports/GAO-20-701/).

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